Cp329.1
M878c

Cameron Morrison Speaks
at Chapel Hill

The Library
of the
University of North Carolina

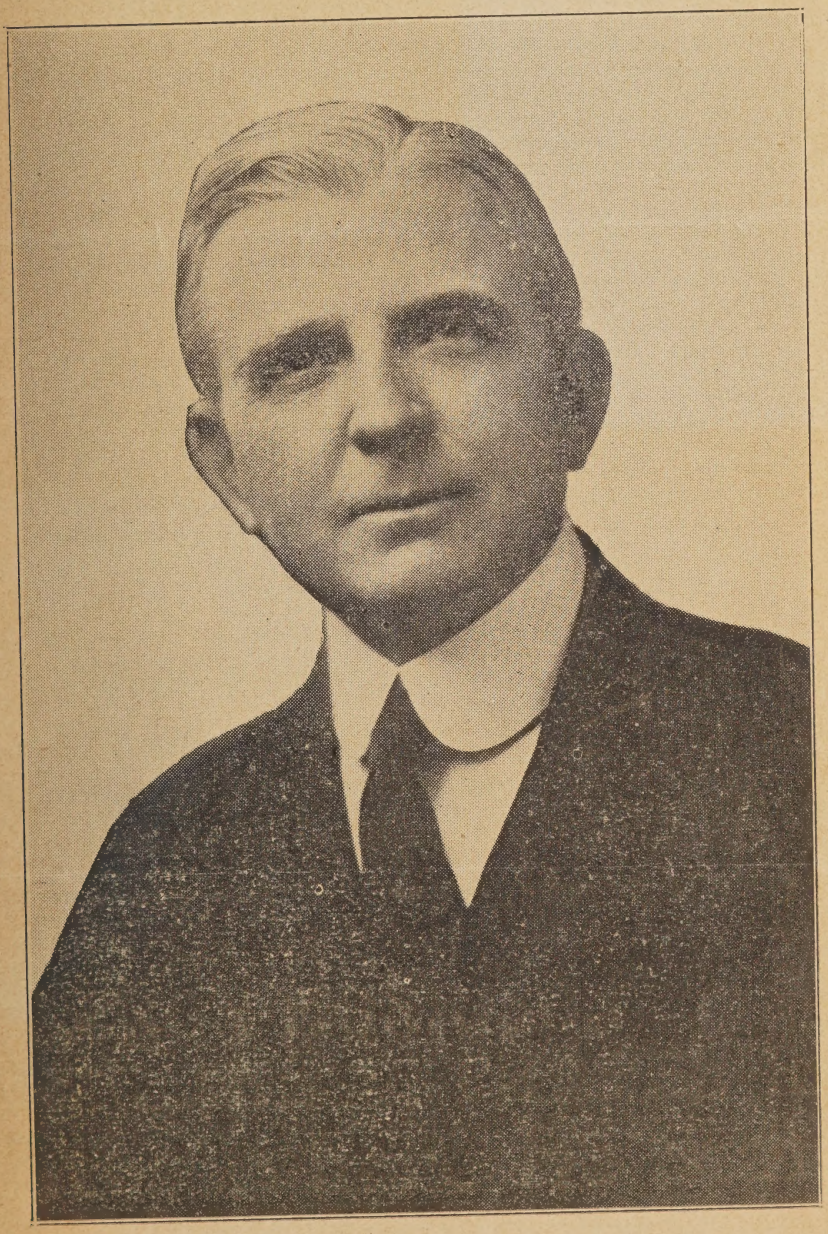
Collection of North Caroliniana
Endowed by
John Sprunt Hill
of the Class of 1889

Cp 329.1
M878c

This BOOK may ... ut TWO WEEKS
ONLY, and is ... a f... FIVE
CENTS a d...

CAMERON MORRISON SPEAKS AT CHAPEL HILL

States Where He Stands



HON. CAMERON MORRISON

SYNOPSIS OF SPEECH OF HON. CAMERON MORRISON, CANDIDATE FOR DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION FOR GOVERNOR, DELIVERED AT CHAPEL HILL, MARCH 5, 1920.—STATES WHERE HE STANDS.

In beginning his address Mr. Morrison said:

"It was not my good fortune to be educated in the University. The first great disappointment of my life was met when I realized that my duty in life forbade an effort to work my way through this noble institution, and receive the strength and culture which I so much desired, and which I knew could be acquired here. But I have loved this noble university, from my youth, and through all the years of my political activities I have fearlessly befriended it from every assault.

"If I am ever governor of North Carolina, this university will have the heart of the governor, as it did the day the governor's boy heart well night broke because he could not enter it as a student, and a candidate for its ennobling possibilities."

Mr. Morrisou then proceeded to declare the motives which actuated him in seeking an election to the governorship. He declared that for a long period of years he had been controlled by a spirit which moved him in the direction of public service; that as a private citizen he had given much of his time for 28 years to the great cause of democracy and good government; that commencing soon after becoming of age he had participated actively in all the great battles which involved the fortunes of the democratic party, whether in determining party policies within the party, or confronting the republican party; that he had been deeply interested in the cause of education, and in public speech and in every way which opportunity offered, he had backed up Aycock, Alderman, McIver, Noble and Alexander Graahm in the great educational campaign which they inaugurated some 20 years ago; that he had been interested in good roads, prohibition and all other movements looking to the betterment of the people of the state; that his love of public service had grown upon him, and that in the maturity of his years he earnestly desired the greater opportunity to serve the state and its people which would be afforded through the power and influence of the great office of governor; that he had no vanity about the matter, and did not seek the office from the viewpoint of enjoying the great distinction incident to it, but from an impelling desire to help defend the great basic principles of the democratic party, and promote the happiness of the people of his country.

PARTY'S PLATFOR HIS.—WAR TAX MUST BE REDUCED.

The speaker declared that he was a democrat, and a believer in responsible party government; and that if he wasa candidate for governor at all, he would run upon the record of the democratic party, and the platform to be adopted by the democratic party in the state convention, which would meet before the primary; that when this platform was adopted by the democracy of the state, acting through its duly chosen representatives, he fould stand upon it, and defend it against all assaults, as he had been doing for the last 28 or 29 years.

He hoped the party platform would endorse the great administration of Woodrow Wilson and proceeded to eulogize this administration.

He hoped the party platform would endorse the convenant of the league of nations, and said that he would glory in the opportunity to canvass North Carolina in defense of this effort of civilization under the leadership of Woodrow Wilson, to prevent war and its suffering for all time.

He hoped the party platform would specifically declare for an immediate repeal of all the war powers granted the government during the war. He favored an immediate decentralization of the government at Washington and the cessation of all efforts to control the business of the people, in order that normal trade conditions could be quickly re-established andthat the tmie-honored policy of the democratic party in destroying monopoly should be enforced, and the law of supply and demand allowed to apply to our business life.

He hoped the democratic state convention would declare for, and demand that the unpaid part of the recent war debt should be spread over the life of at least one generation; that the burden of paying the enormous cost of the war ought not to be borne altogether by those who have borne the burden and suffering of the hour, but should be spread at lesat over a period of 30 or 40 years; that this would relieve the high cost of living more than anything which could be fairly and safely done.

STATE AFFAIRS.

Coming to state affairs, Mr. Morrison declared that he hoped and believed the platform would endorse the democratic party's splendid administration of the state's affairs under Governor Bickett's administration. He then proceeded to eulogize it.

He favored a continuation of the democratic party's program, begun 20 years ago, under the leadership of Simmons, Aycock, Josephus Daniels, Locke Craig and other

patriots of construction and upbuilding in every important aspect of the state's life. He declared that this program had been backed by the great religious forces of the state, and by Alderman, McIver, Noble, Graham and the great army of patriotic men who led the state to change its disgraceful policy in regard to education. He told of the democratic party's record in the matter of education and favored improvement in this important matter as fast as the increased wealth of the state fould permit, without increased taxation. He told of the party's program in respect to health protection, scientific agriculture, good roads, and its broad and statesmanlike policy of fostering every industry in which our people are legitimately engaged.

He declared he favored increased devotion by the democratic party to the great program upon which it had lifted up and glorified the state, and that he would oppose with all his might being diverted by any ism, revolutionary or socialistic scheme which would shake the foundation stones of our great and happy democracy. He declared that the humble, though energetic part he had played as a private in the 20 years battle for progress in North Carolina was the glory and justification of his life; that North Carolina had progressed for 20 years as no other state in the union had progressed, and must continue to progress, but that the way to do it was to go forward along great constructive lines, and avoid, as we would death, all socialistic, new-fangled and class movements which would not square with the great fundamental principles of the democratic party and the constitution of our country.

STATE TAXATION.

The last general assembly had enacted a new revenue and machinery act, commonly known as the "revaluation act." He had never criticised it. The general assembly had also adopted and submitted to the people of the state certain constitutional amendments upon the subject of taxation which provided for an abrogation of the present provisions of our constitution on the subject of an income tax, and the substitution of a just and sensible provision. Mr. Morrison declared that he hoped the party platform adopted at the state convention would recommend these constitutional amendments to the favorable consideration of the voters of the state; tha they should be adopted, in order that the state might adopt a modern and scientific system of taxation.

The so-called "revaluation act" passed by the general assembly was confessedly a mare transition measure from the worn-out and defective system of the past to the scientific and intelligent system finally aimed at by the general assembly. The one thought given to this measure seemed to be upon the question of the amount at which property in North Carolina should be valued. It was not known yet what the final valuation would be. The work had not been completed. Chiticism of this phase of the matter should be withheld until the work had been completed, and the justice of it could be considered.

Taxation had been kept down in North Carolina by the democratic party, and it would be kept down in the future. We had paid less tax per capita under the government of this state by the democratic party than any other state in the union; and, all things considered, we had enjoyed the best and most progressive government in the entire republic.

But there is this view of the so-called "revaluation act," and the new constitutional amendments. What is the final system of taxation to be? Mr. Morrison declared that he favored, and unless the party convention in Raleigh took such actions as bound him to the contrary, he would advocate with all the power at his command adoption by the people of the constitutional amendments upon the subject of taxation, and if they were adopted, he would then favor a system of taxation under which it would become necessary to substantially repeal the present revenue and machinery act, and substitute a system of taxation, modern, just and scientific, which could not be done under the present constitution of this state by the last General Assembly, or any other body of men.

FOR LOCAL CONTROL.

He declared with great emphasis that he was opposed to the feature, necessary as a temporary matter, of the present "revaluation act" which sought to control the counties, towns and cities of the state, and limit their action in the matter of txation. He declared that the great progress which we had made in 20 years had largely been accomplished by allowing towns, cities, counties and special school districts of the state to vote special and heavy taxes upon themselves for the purpose of carrying forward schools and other important community development. He declared that he favored the time honored policy of the democratic party of self-government for the towns, cities and counties of this state and would fight to the utmost any effort finally to destroy in North Carolina this basic principle of the democratic party; that the state, of course, was sovereign, but that it had permitted the most liberal local and community self-government. He opposed a bridle being put upon the towns, cities, counties and progressive communities of North Carolina by any set of drivers, however intelligent,

sitting in a high seat in the city of Raleigh, and guiding the people of North Carolina along such paths and ways as they saw fit to let them move.

The question about this matter is not at what price property may be valued in the state, but what effect will it have upon the great basic principles of democratic government, more priceless than all property. He did not believe that any great democratic leader, and certainly not a majority of the last Assembly, desired, or dreamed that it would desire, finally to destroy local self-government in North Carolina by a rigid and inflexible control of the rate of taxation in the towns, cities and counties in the state, to the present or any other fixed standard. Considered as a transition measure and as an effort seeking an improved and scientific system of taxation in our State, and an abrogation of the almost unworkable system which we have necessarily been employing, the taxation acts of the General Assembly, all things considered, are entitled to the hearty approbation of the people of the State. But if there is a movement in North Carolina, by the selfish and designing, to defeat the constitutional amendment and retain the so-called "revaluation act," then, the speaker declared, he was ready for an old time fight in North Carolina.

He favored and the General Assembly had made way for, a system of taxation that would raise the necessary funds to defray the expenses of the state government without placing any tax for State purposes upon property, either private, corporate, railroad, or otherwise, from the present special sources of taxation by the State we raised nearly enough money to run the State government; our present State tax was only a little more than 11 cents on the $100 value, with the present low valuation; and the new system which could be easily adopted after the adoption of the constitutional amendments should raise all funds necessary for the purpose of State government, from a very small income tax, licenses, inheritance tax, etc.—No larger than is now paid by Teachers, Doctors, Lawyers, Clerks, Ministers of the Gospel, etc.

When this is done, as it should be, we should then provide that the counties, under a proper machinery act, and under the fixed limitations of our constitution, should value property for taxation by the towns, counties and special tax districts for local purposes.

He favored absolutely taking care of the weak counties of the state under the imperative mandate of our constitution. This could be done as effectively and with much less trouble and with greater equity and justice to the stronger counties, under the new system. The six months school is protected by the constitution.

Under the new system which ought to be adopted, and which he was confident the democratic party aimed at, there would be no excuse for the central authorities at Raleigh, acting through agents and employes, to value all the property in North Carolina for purposes of local taxation, and to fix and control the rate of taxation to be lieved by the free people of the counties, cities and towns of the state.

AIMED AT JUSTICE.

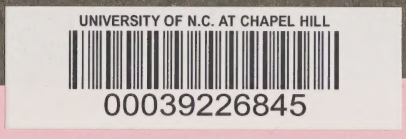
"I do not know what particular selfish groups, or individual representatives of special interests, who had membership in the General Assembly, may have had in mind, but I think I know that the great majority of that wise, patriotic and progressive General Assembly sought to establish in North Carolina a great and just system of taxation under which the State's revenues would be derived from sources separate and distinct from those from which the counties, cities, towns and special tax districts derive their revenue, and that it had no thought of finally putting a bridle upon every county, city and town in the state," said Mr. Morrison.

The present arrangement was the best which could be made under the existing provisions of our constitution. The time had come for revaluation, and the great responsibilty of trying to equalize property values throughout a great, rich and rapidly growing State devolved upon them. They were to destroy discrimination. It is a great undertaking, surrounded by difficulties that no set of men can overcome. I am satisfied that the agencies employed by the state, from the corporation commission down, are acting honestly about it, and will do their best to arrive at justice and equality. But they know it cannot be done, and the democratic party urges and advises the people of the state to adopt the constitutional amendments, and provide for a new system under which the hopeless effort to try to equalize all values between the various counties of North Carolina shall be unnecessary, because property taxation will be made a local matter and put under local control.

Mr. Morrison discussed many of the duties of the Governor's office, stated his views of the pardoning power, the control and care of the great charitable institutions of the state, the penitentiary, law enforcement, etc.

He closed his speech with a passionate appeal to the young men to study the fundamental principles of the democratic party, and the basic principles of human right and liberty upon which our mighty fabric of government had been founded.

He declared these great basic principles of the democratic party, if adhered to, would save the country from all the onslaughts of socialism and madness which could beat against the foundation stones of the republic.


UNIVERSITY OF N.C. AT CHAPEL HILL
00039226845

FOR USE ONLY IN

THE NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION

28957